

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1116

By Massey

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Melody Hawkins on her selection as National University's 2021 Teacher of the Year.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those outstanding teachers who have devoted their careers to providing the highest-quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, Melody Hawkins is one such estimable educator, who has distinguished herself as a professional of the greatest dedication, ability, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Hawkins has been selected as National University's 2021 Teacher of the Year, a most befitting honor that recognizes educators who use social emotional learning in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, Melody Hawkins graduated from the University of Tennessee and started her career in Knox County as an eighth-grade science teacher at Vine Middle School; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, she moved to Austin-East Magnet High School, where she works to represent students of color, focusing on student agency and ownership of learning and giving her students voice and choice in their pathways to mastery; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Hawkins is known for dedicating her time to supporting students and helping them to overcome negative stereotypes to excel beyond all expectations; and

WHEREAS, as an assistant administrator, Ms. Hawkins is able to help shape the tone of society and encourage every student to find their passion; her favorite part of teaching is watching students grow; and

WHEREAS, first named the Southeast regional winner, Melody Hawkins was one of five finalists for the national award; in addition to a cash prize, she received a full scholarship to earn a master's degree in social emotional learning at National University; and

WHEREAS, as the national winner, Ms. Hawkins will receive a full-ride scholarship to pursue a doctorate at National University; and

WHEREAS, Melody Hawkins, who already holds three degrees, including two master's degrees, has had an inspiring and remarkable career; some of her accomplishments include being named a member of the *Knox.biz* 40 Under 40 Class of 2020, overseeing a team of students who won a national competition assisting NASA in carrying out an experiment on the International Space Station, and designing a virtual summer camp to prepare students for middle school; and

WHEREAS, Melody Hawkins is an extremely talented and compassionate educator who works assiduously to motivate her students to reach their full potential, both as scholars and as citizens; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Hawkins serves as an inspiration to her colleagues and students alike, and her friendship and counsel are highly valued by those who are fortunate to know her; and

WHEREAS, Melody Hawkins truly epitomizes the dedicated teacher who is wholly committed to the highest ideals of public service and quality education for all, and she should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Melody Hawkins on being chosen as National University's 2021 Teacher of the Year, commend her exceptional service to the children of Tennessee, salute her professional expertise and personal excellence, and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.